



THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

(DR. D. S. PARK),

For the Year ending 31st December,
1904.



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HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING,

February 6th, 1905.

TO THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have again the honour to submit for your consideration my Annual Report on the health of the district and the various sanitary improvements and other matters of special importance which have been effected by the action of your Council, or carried out voluntarily at the instigation of private enterprise for the year 1904.

All the Tables of the Local Government Board are appended to my report with the exception of Table II., which refers to sub-districts or parishes of known population, and therefore does not apply to this district, which is a district in itself and not made up of sub-districts or parishes of known population.

It may be convenient here to explain the Tables in detail.

Table I. gives the vital statistics of the whole district during the year 1904.

Table II., as I have said, does not apply to this district.

Table III. gives the cases of Infectious Disease notified during the year.

Table IV. gives the causes of and ages at death during the year.

If we turn to Table IV. we shall find that 206 deaths have been registered during the year. In order, however, to eliminate all possibility of error it is necessary to follow the instructions of the Local Government Board.

As 6 of the deaths occurred to non-residents or those persons brought into the district on account of sickness or other causes, and dying in public institutions there, and 6 to residents or those persons who have been taken out of the district on account of sickness or other causes and have died in public institutions elsewhere, the total number of deaths upon which the mortality must be based is 206, as originally given.

Death-rate.—Table IV., as I have said, gives the causes of and ages at death during the year, so that by a perusal of its contents we shall find all the particulars we require to enable us to estimate and analyze the causes of death in relation to the mortality.

If we estimate the population at the middle of the year, as requested by the Local Government Board, at 8,574, this is equivalent to a death-rate of 24·02 per 1000 per annum, and an infant mortality of 56·8 per cent.

Birth-rate.—The births for the year number 342.

190 Males,
152 Females,

representing a birth-rate of 39·6 per 1000 per annum, and a natural gain to the population of 136.

The following table gives the births, male and female, including birth-rate and natural increase to the population for the last four years.

Year	Births	Males	Females	Rate	Increase
1901	339	151	188	42·7	192
1902	335	163	172	42·1	188
1903	337	172	165	41·8	149
1904	342	190	152	39·6	136

The death-rate per 1000 registered births is 184·2.

The subjoined table gives the death-rate per 1000 from the principal Zymotic diseases for the last three years:—

No.	Diseases.	1902.	1903.	1904.
1	Small-pox	—	—	—
2	Scarlet Fever	·5	·12	·58
3	Diphtheria and Membranous Croup ...	·5	·61	1·3
4	Typhoid and Continued Fever	·125	·24	·58
5	Measles	·125	·37	1·6
6	Whooping Cough	·125	—	·1
7	Diarrhœa, Dysentery and Enteritis... ..	·125	·49	·4
8	Phthisis	1·375	1·6	1·2
9	Acute Diseases of the Lungs	3·875	4·8	4·3
10	Other Tubercular Diseases	·75	·49	·35

New Cases of Sickness.—As you are aware, Gentlemen, the Infectious Disease Notification Act has been in force in this division of the Union since the 1st February, 1890.

It is my invariable practice on receiving the Notification Forms to visit and inspect the premises occupied by the patients with as little delay as possible, and to give all necessary instructions as to isolation and disinfection.

We are a mining population with a large birth-rate, and a great majority of our houses are of the cottage property type and afford no adequate facilities for isolation. Indeed the resources of the householders are often severely taxed in order to find sufficient accommodation for their families with a proper regard for the separation of the sexes.

It is obvious, therefore, that home isolation, with few exceptions, is a physical impossibility, so that hospital relief in all infectious sickness becomes a necessity alike in the interest of the public and the individual

himself. Considering that the isolation hospital is the property of the community, and is supported out of the rates, it should be open to all free of charge. At the present moment the payments received from patients for their maintenance in hospital are almost nil, but as there is no certainty that a charge will not be made, many persons prefer to keep their sick at home rather than incur the risk of having to pay.

Disinfectants.—These are supplied free of charge, and your inspector himself often personally superintends their use, so that the householder is put to no expense in fumigating and disinfecting his premises. No disinfection of such articles as the bed and bedding can be recognized as satisfactory that is not carried out in our portable disinfecting apparatus. As the apparatus is taken to the house and everything disinfected free of charge, I have no sympathy for those who decline its use in suitable and proper cases. Indeed I make it an invariable practice in removing patients to hospital to insist upon all contaminated articles being disinfected in this way. To remove patients to hospital and to leave the contaminated articles alone is worse than useless, and is simply a waste of money.

Infectious Sickness.—214 cases have been notified during the year. Table III. gives the diseases, ages and all other necessary particulars.

There has been a very considerable increase in the infectious sickness during the year as compared with last year, notably in Scarlet Fever, Typhoid Fever, Diphtheria, Membranous Croup and Erysipelas.

Diphtheria.—Diphtheria is still on the increase all over the country notwithstanding the efforts that are made to check the spread of the disease. A few years ago it was almost exclusively confined to towns, but now it is found quite as frequently in the most scattered rural districts as in populous centres. As I pointed out in my report to the Local Government Board and County Council, the outbreak of the disease in the month of March was chiefly due to the epidemic of Measles which prevailed at the time acting as a predisposing cause. Almost all the cases were recovering or had recently recovered from that disease when Diphtheria supervened. To a large extent the same may be said of many of the cases that occurred subsequently.

I herewith append a table giving the date of notification, the locality and the sanitary defects found on my rounds of inspection. It will be observed that the cases were confined to no particular part of the town, but, on the contrary, were distributed more or less all over the district except Chilton Moor and Colliery Row, both of which places enjoyed a complete immunity from the disease. The milk question was carefully considered, but there was no evidence to show that the milk was in any way responsible for any of the cases, four of which were using condensed milk. The cases were all carefully investigated, and the premises and out-offices inspected with a view to determine, if possible, the source of infection, but in a majority of the cases my rounds of inspection failed to throw any additional light on the question, as a perusal of the table will show.

Membranous Croup.—As was the case in the Diphtheria outbreak, the cases of Croup were all more or less associated with Measles, as the table will show. The premises were inspected in the usual way, but no sanitary defects were found.

Scarlet Fever.—Scarlet Fever has never quite left the district during the past year, as the appended table will show. The disease was usually mild in type, rendering the diagnosis at times a matter of great difficulty. In not a few of the cases the disease was not even suspected until the peeling process had actually begun. In those mild attacks it is almost impossible to satisfy the parents that isolation and other precautionary measures are necessary. They seem to think that it is only in severe cases that such measures should be taken; thus it is that the gross carelessness, of which I am constantly complaining, in permitting children to mingle with the children of others either in or coming from infected houses is so common in this district. A child is not permitted to play in a public street while suffering from an infectious disease, but the law does not prevent him from inviting all his play-fellows into the sick chamber and sending them away again as fresh centres of infection and a serious danger to the public health.

I feel compelled to call attention to what I must describe as a very serious omission or defect in the Notification Act. The Medical Attendant at present is simply required to notify forthwith to the Medical Officer of Health, when he is satisfied, that he is in attendance upon a case to which the Act applies, and his legal obligations under the Act at once cease. He is not legally obliged to perform the most ordinary and obvious duty of informing the parents or other responsible persons that the children from an infected house must not be allowed to attend school. Notwithstanding the word *forthwith*, it often happens, especially in isolated places where the postal arrangements are not perfect, that the notification forms do not reach the Medical Officer of Health for two or three days after the disease has been recognized. Meanwhile the children are allowed to attend school. If we seek to obtain a conviction before the magistrates under Section 126, sub-section 3, of the Public Health Act, one is met with the difficulty that, while the doctor in attendance is prepared to admit that it is his practice to caution parents against sending children to school from infected houses, he is not prepared to swear that he did do so in the present case. These cases are not unusual; indeed, during the year under consideration, I reported two such cases to your Council, and although it was your intention to take proceedings against the offending parties, it was found that the law did not give you the necessary power.

It is perfectly obvious that it should be made compulsory on the part of the medical attendant to at once acquaint the parents with the nature of the disease, and to give strict orders that the children be kept from school.

Small-Pox.—Only one case of Small-Pox was notified during the year. It was an imported case. The person in question was a tramp, and had come into the town from Gateshead. On seeking admission to the workhouse he was found to be suffering from Small-Pox, and was at once removed to the Northern Isolation Hospital. Not only the cell in which he was placed, but all the cells were fumigated and stoved, and all contaminated articles burned. So prompt and successful were the measures taken that not a single subsequent case occurred. The disease was of a mild type, and the man had been vaccinated. Our usual precautions to safeguard the town from the introduction of Small-Pox are strictly observed. The

common lodging-houses are regularly inspected, and the occupiers keep your Medical Officer acquainted with the health of their inmates. The tramps at the workhouse are also inspected twice daily.

Typhoid Fever.—It was not until the month of August that Typhoid Fever began to assume the proportions of an epidemic. Up to the end of July only six cases in all had been notified, while in the month of August alone seven cases were reported. The appended table gives the date of notification, locality and defects found on my rounds of inspection.

It will be seen that all the cases took place in Houghton itself, Chilton Moor and Colliery Row, as was the case in the Diphtheria outbreak, enjoyed a complete immunity from the disease. The cases were inspected in the usual way, and the milk question formed the subject of careful consideration.

One of the two cases in Mildred Street was evidently imported from Sunderland, as the girl in question was on a visit to some friends when almost at once she developed symptoms of the disease. In all probability the other case was the result of direct infection.

At the Market Place the yard is small and the privy and ashpit are close to the back door.

At Bowlby Street the ashpits were large and when cleaned out there was always a foot of water at the bottom, and the privy walls were damp. In one of the adjoining houses, and before the outbreak occurred, a child was ill for four or five weeks as the result of sickness and Diarrhoea, as reported by the parents.

In Sunderland Street the yard drain was liable to become choked up unless carefully attended to and cleaned out, owing apparently to want of proper gradient.

It will be observed that many of the cases centred round a limited area. As I have said the milk question was carefully considered. Of the seven cases one was using condensed milk, while of the remaining six four were getting their milk from the same dairy. This may have been a mere coincidence, as I was not able to ascertain any further facts.

One of the cases was evidently contracted by bathing in the Hetton Burn at Floater's Mill. At this point warm water from the Sixth Pit is discharged into the burn, making the place a favourite spot for bathing. The Burn here is undoubtedly polluted, and the boy complained of feeling ill after swallowing a mouthful of the water, indeed he complained of feeling ill more or less all the time, and in about fourteen days he was notified as suffering from Typhoid Fever. It is a remarkable fact that a year ago a cousin of the lad contracted Typhoid Fever while bathing in the same place and drinking some of the water.

One of the subsequent cases was evidently due to eating mussels at the Houghton Feast. This man and his friend after partaking of the mussels became suddenly ill. The friend vomited and was soon all right again, but the man himself developed the disease, which unfortunately had a fatal termination.

The part our sewers may have played in the propagation of some of the Typhoid cases is referred to under the head of ventilation of sewers.

Instructions are given to burn or bury the excreta after careful

disinfection, but it is impossible to feel satisfied that the instructions are carried out.

Cholera.—We give extra supervision to the drains and sewers during the summer months, and insist upon a more frequent emptying and disinfection of the ashpits and privies, with a view to guard against the introduction of Cholera into the district, and also the propagation and spread of summer Diarrhœa.

Erysipelas.—There is nothing special about the Erysipelas cases. They were all of the ordinary type with the exception of two which were due to accident. Cold as a rule was given as the exciting cause. Very few defects were found on my rounds of inspection.

Whooping Cough.—As was to be expected, considering the prevalence of Measles in the district during the year, and the frequency with which the two are associated, Whooping Cough assumed something of the proportions of an epidemic from April to September.

Chicken Pox.—A few cases of Chicken Pox have come under my observations during the past year. They were of the ordinary type and presented no features of special interest.

Measles.—Measles prevailed in epidemic form all over the district in the early part of the year. The children attending the New Town Infant School suffered severely, and as a consequence the school was ordered to be closed, with a view to having the premises and out-offices fumigated and otherwise disinfected. It is open to question whether any real advantage is gained by closing a school on account of an outbreak of infectious disease unless, of course, there is reason to believe that the school itself is the source of infection. Whenever we consider it advisable to close a school under such circumstances we invariably insist upon disinfection and fumigation of the premises and out-offices, and there can be no question as to the wisdom of that course.

Diarrhœa.—The prevalence of summer Diarrhœa in the district has been less marked during the year than in former years, with the exception of the year 1903, when we were singularly free from the disease owing partly to the coldness of the season and lack of sunshine. The printed circulars of the County Council relating to the feeding and management of infants and young children were duly distributed throughout the district. The close proximity of the out-offices to the pantries, and the long streets, in many cases set back to back, with a back street between them, are no doubt contributory causes to our periodic outbreaks of summer diarrhœa, as during the emptying of the out-offices the stench at times is very disagreeable.

Hospital Accommodation.—The full benefits of an isolation hospital will never be obtained until it is recognised by the community at large that all infectious cases should be removed to hospital at once for isolation and treatment where home isolation is impossible. When a case here and there only is removed very little good is done, as the cases left behind simply act as fresh centres of infection. I have often felt that the hearty co-operation of the medical profession in this connection is of great service, and I cordially invite their valuable assistance.

Fourteen cases have been treated in the hospital during the past year, viz. :—

6 Scarlet Fever,
5 Typhoid Fever,
3 Diphtheria.

of which three had a fatal termination.

As you know, Gentlemen, joint action is being taken by the three Councils in the Union with the object of providing separate hospital accommodation for the treatment of Small-Pox for the whole Union. A site has been decided upon and plans and specifications have been approved and passed, and the work will be proceeded with at the earliest possible date.

Influenza.—Influenza was rather prevalent during the first and fourth quarters of the year. It is, however, becoming much milder in type and less protracted year by year than formerly, and complications are less common. Icy cold winds invariably predispose to an attack of the disease.

Pneumonia and other Chest Affections in place of being grouped together under one head as formerly are now kept separate and distinct, so that for statistical and other purposes there is a distinct advantage in the change. I can only repeat, Gentlemen, that our mortality from chest affections is still very high. The North-east winds and the clayey subsoil on which many of our houses are built, are the only explanations I am able to offer for the high mortality, although the staple industry of the district may be looked upon as a predisposing cause.

The other forms of sickness from which we have suffered during the past year were all of the most ordinary kind, and call for no special mention.

Milk.—Our milk supply has been ample for all our requirements, and there has been no reason to doubt its quality.

Meat.—Our meat as a rule is home-fed and of good quality; and the butchers are ever ready and willing to give access to their premises to your Medical Officer and Inspector any time they desire to enter.

Slaughtering is still done in many of the front shops, but the offal and other refuse is at once removed to a proper and suitable place.

I disapprove altogether of slaughtering in the shops, as it is contrary to all nice feeling and has a demoralizing effect upon the young and thoughtless. Crowds of boys and girls are only too eager to witness such sights and to gloat over what they see. If the practice is to continue, the slaughtering should be done within certain hours, so as to ensure perfect privacy. Only in one instance was it necessary to summon your Medical Officer. In this case the place was untidy, and there was a want of proper supervision over the premises.

Food and Drugs Act.—Proceedings under this Act are taken by the County Council.

Dairies and Cow Sheds.—Your Inspector is careful and systematic in his inspection and supervision over the Dairies and Cow Sheds. Last year the Cow Sheds were carefully measured, when it was found that many of the premises had not the proper air space for the number of cows kept. All this has been altered with the result that we have no overcrowding, and the premises are well ventilated and lighted, scrupulously clean and well kept.

Lodging Houses.—Our common lodging houses are kept by respectable persons who are ever ready and willing to acquaint your Medical Officer when any of their lodgers are ill or out of sorts; thus rendering valuable aid in safeguarding the town from the introduction of infectious disease by tramps and other persons of a like kind.

Water.—Our reservoirs are in good working order, and until the beginning of December we had no difficulty in keeping them full. This was caused by the sudden lessening of the volume of water at the feeders. I am happy to add, however, that the normal volume has once more returned.

Scavenging.—The scavenging is now let annually by tender, and the work upon the whole is fairly well done, although there is still room for improvement. There is still an unwillingness on the part of some of the contractors to empty the refuse direct into the cart in place of on to the road. This, I presume, is owing to the extra work which it entails. The contracts are sufficiently binding and meet all contingencies, and as the work is well paid for, no consideration should be shown to any contractor who fails to carry out the conditions of his contract.

The fouling of the back streets in the way complained of is very objectionable and highly injurious to the public health. In no case has it been necessary to withhold cheque for payment during the past year. The weekly report sheets introduced by your Inspector have had a good effect.

Ventilation of Sewers.—During the past year our sewers have been far from satisfactory. The street ventilators have been foul and offensive, and many of our Typhoid and Diphtheria cases have been looked upon as traceable to this cause. I complained to your Council of the foul and unsatisfactory condition of the street ventilators, and as a consequence your Surveyor was instructed to go into the matter and report to your Council. It now appears that in laying the sewers clay was used at the joints instead of cement, with the result that it is wearing away and percolation into the soil is taking place. If this be true, and we have it upon the evidence of your Surveyor, our sewers will always be a source of danger to the public health. From time to time it was found necessary to cover over one or more of our street ventilators with a metal plate in order to get rid of the objectionable smell, and as additional ventilation has not always been added it is not surprising that the ventilation of our sewers is far from satisfactory. Three of the worst street ventilators are to be closed and ascending shafts are to be erected at once in their stead. These will be placed at the top end of Robinson Street and Mautland Street, Houghton, and near to Mr. Jones, Chilton Moor. This is in the way of experiment, and if not successful a more comprehensive scheme must be devised, as the proper ventilation of our drains and sewers is of all importance.

Flushing of Drains and Sewers.—Owing to the complaints of members of your Council and others as to the foul condition of our drains and sewers, your Inspector was requested to give special attention to their more frequent flushing and disinfection. Many obstructions had to be removed from the sewers at High Hill-side, Half-way House, Newbottle Street, Rose Street, Short Street, Mount Pleasant, Bowlby Street and New Town. In the latter case considerable difficulty was

experienced through a branch drain not having been connected to the main sewer at the time the latter was laid down some three years ago. The branch has been connected and is now in good working order. The obstructions as a rule consisted of house cloths, scrubbing brushes, toys, &c.

Some substantial improvements have been carried out during the past year, and I am indebted to your Surveyor for much valuable information not only with respect to these and other matters of equal importance, but for his ever ready and willing assistance in all matters falling within the scope of my duties as your Medical Officer of Health, and I take this opportunity of offering him my heartiest thanks.

Sewer Extension.—Houghton Villa Estate.—In consequence of the rapid development of this Estate considerable extension has been made to the sewers, all of which have been laid with properly cemented joints, and on concrete when the ground was not naturally solid, and each pipe was inspected before the contractor was allowed to cover in. Sufficient man holes and lamp holes, &c., have been provided, and the work altogether has been properly carried out.

Street Formation, Villa Estate.—The owners of the property on this Estate have been served with notice requiring them to make up and form the various streets. The owners are quite willing for your Council to do the work, and signed an agreement to that effect, and undertook to pay the cost on completion of the work. The contract for the work has been let and is now being proceeded with under the daily supervision of your Surveyor. When finished a very substantial improvement will be effected, as in wet weather the streets are in a very deplorable condition.

Extension of Water Mains, Villa Estate.—Considerable lengths of new water mains have been laid on this Estate. The houses in Violet Street, Wallace Street, Rose Street and Thornton Street have all been provided with an independent water supply.

Ironside Estate.—Plans, &c., are in course of preparation for the compulsory formation of the streets, footpaths, &c., on this estate. It is to be hoped that the work will be proceeded with at once, as the streets are very bad. In wet weather they are almost impassable, and are a source of danger to the general traffic.

Highways.—The whole of Sunderland Street from the boundary stone in the Cut to the foot of Church Street has been made up with whinstone, mountain limestone and chippings. The road has been brought up to a correct contour, which has the effect of allowing it to drain quickly in wet weather. Newbottle Street, Front Street, Colliery Row, the whole of the Dairy Lane, Chilton Moor district, Seaham Road, Gillas Lane and Church Street have all been made up with good slag and slag chippings properly blended and thoroughly rolled by steam roller. The whole of these roads are now in good condition and all drain rapidly in wet weather.

Footpaths.—A considerable quantity of tar paving has been laid down during the past year in Sunderland Street, Edwin Street, George Street, Newbottle Street, Robinson Street, Dairy Lane, Nesham Place, William Street and Colliery Row district.

Dairy Lane Improvements.—Considerable improvement has been made on the road below The Grange. A very dark and dangerous corner has been removed, thus widening and straightening the road very considerably. The surplus material, such as soil, &c., was carted to the new road leading from Edwin Street to the Market Place.

Water Mains.—Considerable difficulty was experienced in the month of July in keeping up sufficient pressure and an adequate supply of water to the high portions of the town in spite of a good supply in the reservoirs. After careful inspection it was discovered that the maximum delivery at the meter box in Sunderland Street was only 100 gallons per minute, while the discharge at this point should have been 350 gallons per minute. As there was evidently some obstruction between the meter and the reservoir, the main was broken into with the result that a large stick was found in the air pipe on Miller's Hill. This had reduced the capacity of the 4-inch main to that of a 2½-inch pipe or main. The removal of the obstruction greatly improved the water supply to the town, but not to the extent that was expected. The mains were next broken into in the gullet, when it was found that both branches from the reservoirs were considerably choked up with deposit, owing to the mains at this point not having been cleaned for some considerable time. This work required the personal supervision of your Surveyor and the strenuous efforts of your workmen for over forty-three consecutive hours. Since the work was carried out there was no lack of pressure, or scarcity of water, until about the beginning of December, when the feeders showed signs of taking up, leaving us with one of our reservoirs empty, and only some three feet of water for the supply of the town in the other. This sudden and extraordinary taking up of the feeders has occurred two or three times during the past twenty years, and has caused us much anxiety. However, as they have always regained their normal volume, no further notice was taken of the matter. I need not point out, Gentlemen, that should the falling-off at the feeders continue a very serious state of things might arise. In that case the town would be practically without water, unless a supply could be got from the pumping station at East Herrington.

In order to economise or husband our resources as far as possible, it was proposed and carried at your meeting on December 5th, that notice be given to the Rural District Council of the intention of the Urban District Council to cease to supply water to Dubmire, but an effort will be made to continue the supply for two months from December 5th, 1904. This will have the effect of adding some 15,000 gallons daily to our general supply, which should do much to keep us on the right side.

Reservoirs.—During the year both reservoirs have been emptied and thoroughly cleansed of all deposit.

Public Lighting.—It has been the custom of your Inspector to remove all lamps during the summer, but owing to the dark evenings during the past two summers it was found necessary to light a considerable number of lamps in the main streets during the summer months. The whole of the lanterns have been overhauled, repaired and painted, together with all poles, brackets, &c.

Houghton Burn.—This burn has been cleansed of all deposit in anticipation of rain storms. The wood baulk covering in that portion of the burn in the Market Place has been repaired, as it had given way in places and was a serious danger to the general traffic.

Highway Sides.—Colliery Row and Chilton Moor district, together with Durham Road, have all been trimmed and cut back, thus presenting a much tidier appearance.

New Road—Edwin Street to Market Place.—Although considerable improvement has been made to this road during the past year, much still remains to be done, however, as in wet weather it is a veritable quagmire and a source of great annoyance to the inhabitants. The brow of the hill at the end of Edwin Street has been lowered quite two feet. The kerb and channel have been relaid, and the foundation of the road replaced and rolled with steam roller. Between four and five thousand loads of surplus material have been deposited and levelled over during the year. The large refuse heap in the Dairy Lane rendered innocuous by its long exposure to the air, and the surplus material from the Tramway operations, were used in the formation of the road, giving it a hard and substantial bottom.

Tramways.—The work of laying down the new rails for the tramways is now well within the district, the portion from the boundary at Quarry Row through Newbottle Street and Dairy Lane to the boundary at Colliery Row being practically completed. During the progress of the work it has been necessary to remove many lengths of water mains, hydrants, valves, man-holes and lamp-holes, &c., the expense of which, of course, was borne by the Tramway Company.

Houghton Feast.—The Feast of 1904 was conducted in a very orderly and satisfactory manner. Not a single complaint was made to your Surveyor either by the inhabitants or the show people themselves.

The owners of living vans were all served with notice requesting them to gather together all refuse matter for removal by the Council's cart which was in attendance each morning. This had the desired effect of keeping the town free from all offensive and filthy matter.

Factory and Workshop Act, 1901.—I have not yet been furnished with an official list of the Factories and Workshops in our district. I have, however, inspected all that were known to me, and I believe, when officially reported, it will be found that my inspections have included them all. Only in two instances had I occasion to complain. In these cases the premises were untidy. This was at once remedied. We have no public bakehouses or dangerous trades in our district. The cleanliness, air space, ventilation, floor drainage and the provision of suitable conveniences in the other cases, were all in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

I have inspected the district from time to time, Gentlemen, both alone and in conjunction with your Surveyor, and all matters of importance have at once been brought before your Council.

Permit me again, Gentlemen, to offer you my heartiest thanks for your ever ready and willing co-operation in all matters relating to the health of the district and the general well-being of the community. My recommendations are always well received by your Council, and every-

thing calculated to improve and safeguard the public health meets with your warmest support. Your decision to provide a Recreation Ground for the town—unanimously approved by a public meeting convened for the purpose of ascertaining the opinion of the ratepayers on the subject—cannot fail to have a good effect upon the general health of the community, besides providing a want keenly felt by the young and old alike.

Water Supply.—The total consumption of water for the past year has been 51,849,000 gallons, equal to a daily average of 142,000 gallons for all purposes. The total consumption for trade purposes as registered by the meters in the district was 9,674,000 gallons, or a daily average of 26,500 gallons. For street watering, steam rolling purposes and sewer flushing 191,500 gallons have been used, equal to a daily average of 524 gallons. Total consumption for domestic purposes—63 new buildings, trades supplied other than by meter, 50 burst mains, schools having automatic flush tanks 11 in all, public houses of which there are 29, 9 cowbyres, about 80 people who keep horses and 10 butchers—has been 41,983,500 gallons, or a daily average consumption of 115,000 gallons, equal to a supply of $12\frac{1}{2}$ gallons per head of population, based on the fact that there are 1838 inhabited houses in the district, which taken as 5 persons per house, gives a population of 9,190, not including two portions of the Rural District, supplied on a basis of assessment and representing nearly 200 people.

New Houses.—63 new houses, as against 50 for the previous year, have been erected in various parts of the district during the past year, chiefly on the Villa Estate and at North View.

Death-rate.—I have estimated the population at 8574, and have arrived at that figure by multiplying 144 of the houses built since the census in 1901 by five and adding the result to the population as given at the census, viz.: 7854 add 720, equals 8574. We are certainly not entitled to estimate the population by multiplying the number of houses by five, as shown by the census returns in 1901. The number of houses then in the district was 1783 which, if multiplied by five, would represent a population of 8,915, or 1,061 in excess of the actual population as given at the census in 1901.

I fear we must consider our death-rate high even for a mixed population such as ours. This is the more to be regretted when it is pointed out that the high mortality is the result of the large number of deaths among infants and young children. But for this circumstance our death-rate for the year would be quite satisfactory. 63 of the 206 deaths occurred to infants before they reached their first year; or 117, or 56·8 per cent. died before they reached the age of five years. This appears to me to represent a lamentable sacrifice of infant life, and may be ascribed more or less to improper feeding and a certain amount of carelessness on the part of the parents. As I have often remarked, Gentlemen, we are not singular in this respect. It is a subject that is engaging the attention of authorities all over the country, and sooner or later a remedy must be found for this serious state of things.

I append a copy of the chief vital statistics for the administrative County of Durham for the year under consideration. This will enable you to compare the vital statistics of the district with those for the County.

I have the honour to be,

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

Your obedient Servant,

D. S. PARK,

MEDICAL OFFICER.



TABLE I.
Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1904 and Previous Years.

Year	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	Births		Total Deaths Registered in the District.				Deaths of Non-residents registered in Public Institutions in the District.			Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institutions beyond the District.		Nett Deaths at all Ages belonging to the District.	
		Number	Rate	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.		Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Non-residents registered in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institutions beyond the District.	Number.	Rate	Number.	Rate
				Number.	Rate per 1000 Births registered	Number.	Rate							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
1894	6,620	298	45	39	130.8	125	18.8	17	—	10	135	20.4		
1895	6,670	263	39.4	53	201.5	162	23.23	13	4	7	165	23.09		
1896	6,720	304	45.2	37	118.4	136	20.09	7	3	3	136	20.09		
1897	6,760	305	45.1	30	131.1	99	14.64	16	2	—	97	14.3		
1898	7,202	289	40.1	62	214.5	151	19.3	17	12	3	142	20.02		
1899	7,500	297	39.0	52	175	166	21.6	16	5	—	161	21.4		
1900	7,700	314	40.7	45	143.3	141	18.3	19	12	7	136	17.6		
1901	7,854	339	42.7	50	147.4	147	18.7	16	9	2	140	17.8		
1902	7,984	335	42.1	45	134.3	158	19.7	16	13	2	147	18.4		
1903	8,056	337	41.8	68	201.7	194	24.3	21	10	4	188	23.3		
Averages for years 1894-1903	7,306	308	42.1	48	159.8	147	19.8	15	7	3	144	19.6		
1904	8,574	342	39.6	63	184.2	206	24.02	9	6	6	206	24.02		

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water), 1,551 acres.

Total population at all ages 7858
Number of inhabited houses 1833
Average number of persons per house 4 } at Census of 1901.

Institution within the District receiving sick and infirm persons from outside the District: Union Workhouse.
Institutions outside the District receiving sick and infirm persons from the District: Sunderland Infirmary, Durham Co. Lunatic Asylum.

TABLE III.
Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1904.

Notifiable Disease.	Cases notified in whole District.							Total Cases notified in each Locality.		No. of Cases removed to Hospital from each Locality.
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years								
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65	65 and upwards	Houghton	Workhouse	Houghton
Small-pox ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...
Cholera ...	38	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria ...	8	16	15	4	3	...	38	...	3	
Membranous Croup ...	23	6	2	...	...	...	8	...	...
Erysipelas ...	112	2	1	5	13	2	23	...	...
Scarlet Fever ...	...	56	49	2	2	...	110	2	6
Typhus Fever ...	31	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric Fever ...	...	4	4	15	8	...	31	...	5
Relapsing Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Continued Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Fever ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...
Plague ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals...	214	3	84	71	26	28	211	3	14	

Isolation Hospital: Houghton Urban Isolation Hospital.

TABLE IV.

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during Year 1904.

Causes of Death.	Deaths in or belonging to whole District at subjoined Ages.							Deaths in or belonging to Localities (at all Ages).					Total Deaths in Public Institu- tions in the District
	All Ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and up- wards	Houghton	Workhouse	Infirmary	Asylum	H.M.Prison Durham	
Small-pox ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles ...	14	...	14	...	...	...	...	14	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever ...	5	...	4	1	...	...	...	5	...	...	...	...	...
Whooping-cough	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria and membranous croup	12	...	7	5	...	...	...	12	...	...	...	...	...
Croup ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Fever—													
Typhus... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric... ..	5	...	...	...	3	2	...	4	...	...	...	1	...
Other continued	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Epidemic influenza	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cholera ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Plague ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diarrhoea ...	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...
Enteritis ..	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Fever ...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other septic dis- eases ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Phthisis ...	11	...	...	2	4	5	...	11	...	...	...	...	...
Other tubercular diseases... ..	3	1	...	...	...	2	...	2	...	1	...	...	1
Cancer, malignant disease ...	6	...	...	...	...	2	4	5	1	...	...	...	1
Bronchitis ...	8	3	1	...	1	2	1	8	...	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia ...	29	6	17	1	...	4	1	28	1	...	...	...	1
Pleurisy ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other diseases of Respiratory organs	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Alcoholism—													
Cirrhosis of liver	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Venereal diseases...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Premature birth ...	11	11	...	...	...	...	...	11	...	...	...	...	...
Diseases and acci- dents of parturition	5	...	...	...	2	3	...	5	...	...	...	...	...
Heart diseases ...	15	...	1	...	1	5	8	15	...	...	...	...	2
Accidents ...	4	1	...	...	...	3	...	2	...	2	...	...	...
Suicides ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Senile decay ...	11	...	...	...	...	...	11	10	1	...	...	...	3
Marasmus... ..	11	8	3	...	...	...	...	11	...	...	...	...	...
Convulsions ...	27	22	4	...	1	...	...	27	...	...	...	...	...
Laryngitis ...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
All other causes ...	21	5	3	1	...	7	5	19	...	1	1	...	1
All causes ...	206	63	54	10	12	37	30	197	3	4	1	1	9

APPENDIX.

Summary of Work done in the Inspector of Nuisances' Department during the year 1904, in the Urban District of Houghton-le-Spring.

I. Public Health Acts.	Number of Informal written Notices by Inspector.	Number of Formal Notices by order of Authority.	Number of Nuisances abated after Notice.	General Remarks.
Dwelling-houses & Schools				
Foul Conditions ...	7	—	7	
Structural Defects ...	13	—	13	
Overcrowding ...	1	—	1	
Lodging-houses ...	2	—	2	
Dairies and Milkshops ...	—	—	—	
Cowsheds ...	13	—	13	
Bakehouses ...	—	—	—	
Slaughter-houses ...	11	—	11	
Ashpits and Privies ...	21	—	21	Not including 20 Ashpits reconstructed 1 „ converted to W.C. 4 „ „ Earth C.
Deposits of Refuse and				
Manure ...	3	—	3	
Waterclosets ...	9	—	9	
Defective Yard Paving ...	7	—	7	
House Drainage—				
Defective Traps ...	2	—	2	
No Disconnection from Sewers ...	—	—	—	
Other Faults ...	18	—	18	
Water Supply ...	16	—	16	
Pigsties ...	—	—	—	
Animals Improperly Kept	—	—	—	
Offensive Trades ...	—	—	—	
Smoke Nuisances ...	—	—	—	
Other Nuisances ...	37	—	37	
TOTALS ...	160	—	160	

II. Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890.

	Number
Formal Notices served ...	—
Dwellings dealt with ...	—
Dwellings made habitable after formal notice ...	—
Closing Orders applied for...	—
Closing Orders granted by Magistrates ...	—
Dwellings permanently closed ...	—

III. Water, Food and Drugs.

	Number
Samples of Water taken for Analysis	—
Samples of Water condemned as unfit for use...	—
Seizure of Unwholesome Food	—
Convictions for exposing or selling unwholesome Food	—
Samples of Food and Drugs taken for Analysis	—
Samples of Food found Adulterated	—

IV. Precautions against Infectious Disease.

Lots of Infectious Bedding stoved or destroyed	...	...	...	...	...	19
Houses disinfected after Infectious Disease	...	...	...	...	...	14
Schools	„	„	„	„	„	—
Prosecutions for exposure of infected persons or things	...	...	...	...	...	—
Convictions for	„	„	„	„	„	—

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF DURHAM.

CHIEF VITAL STATISTICS for 1904, and their comparison with 1903
and the average of ten years, 1894—1903.

Estimated population (1904)	...	...	801,100.
„ „ (1903)	...	...	790,770.

	Annual rates per 1000 population.		Mean rates for 10 years 1894- 1903.
	1904	1903	
Birth-rate	35·6	35·8	35·4
Death-rate... ..	18·3	17·7	18·0
Zymotic Death-rate	2·59	2·01	2·20
Infant mortality-rate (per 1000 births)...	162	161	164
Small-pox	0·03	0·03	0·006
Scarlet fever	0·16	0·25	0·19
Diphtheria and Membranous Croup ...	0·29	0·29	0·17
Fever (enteric and continued)	0·15	0·12	0·24
Measles	0·55	0·32	0·43
Whooping Cough	0·43	0·34	0·35
Diarrhoea	0·95	0·73	0·78
Enteritis, &c.	0·38	0·38	0·62
Phthisis	1·07	1·09	1·18
Other tubercular diseases... ..	0·92	0·93	0·90
Respiratory diseases	2·92	3·02	3·15

HOUGHTON URBAN DISTRICT.

DIPHTHERIA.

1904 Date	Sex	Age	Residence.	Remarks
Jan. 11	F	5	Pottery Yard ...	Out-offices defective.
„ 12	F	6	9 Church Street ...	{ Ashpits, &c., are close to back of house; bad smells are frequent; only cleaned once in 4 weeks.
	F	4		
	M	3		
„ 29	F	14	3 Bowlby Street ...	
Feb. 1	F	20		Yard drain out of order.
	M	16	3 Prospect Row ...	{ Removed to Hospital; overcrowding; big family; previous case of Scarlet Fever.
„ 7	F	11	25 Prospect Row ...	
Mar. 10	F	1½	13 Pit Row ...	Offensive street gutter.
„ 11	M	2	6 Violet Street ...	Preceded by an attack of measles.
„ 14	M	5	22 Bowlby Street ...	
„ 15	M	3	5 Quarry Row ...	Children playing with Dunn's in Prospect Row and Van in Market Place.
„ 16	F	6	Market Place ...	
„ 17	M	11	5 Quarry Row ...	Secondary } Refused to allow
„ 18	M	10	„ „ ...	
„ 18	M	8	„ „ ...	
„ 20	F	17	Market Place ...	
„ 21	F	8	21 Union Street ...	
„ 25	F	3	Nesham Place ...	
„ 31	F	3	2 Bowlby Street ...	Preceded by attack of measles.
May 4	M	3	Market Place ...	Foul privy.
„ 9	F	5	Outram Street ...	
„ 11	M	6	Ironside Street ...	
„ 12	F	2	Nesham Place ...	
„ 19	F	3½	Hopper Street ...	
„ 26	F	11	Kirklee Lane ...	Drains defective.
June 4	M	2½	Shield's Place ...	Soft water tank in yard offensive
„ 13	M	1½	2 Short Street, New Town	Defective out-offices.
„ 14	F	6	1 Prospect Row ...	Street ventilator offensive.
July 3	F	2½	15 Mildred Street ...	Water tank in yard.
„ 6	M	2	„ „ ...	„ „
Aug. 19	M	2	43 Robinson Street ...	
„ 24	F	6	35 Robinson Street ...	
Sep. 25	F	31	Sunderland Street... - ...	Butcher's refuse next door.
„ 28	F	28	Low Hill-side ...	
Oct. 12	M	17	Police Station ...	
„ 18	F	33	50 Bruce's Yard ...	{ Scarlet Fever in house previous week.
Dec. 11	F	3	1 William St., New Town	

HOUGHTON URBAN DISTRICT.

MEMBRANOUS CROUP.

1904 Date	Sex	Age	Residence	Remarks
Feb. 1	M	4	William Street, New Town	
Mar. 2	F	5	Grey Horse Lane ...	Preceded by measles. Died.
„ 16	M	3	Outram Street ...	„ „
„ 19	F	3	Back Hopper Street ...	Complicated with measles.
„ 19	F	2	„ „	„ „
„ 21	F	1	Bowlby Street ...	Preceded by measles. „
„ 22	F	3	Robinson Street ...	„ „
Aug. 24	M	4	Colliery Row ...	Child dead on visiting the house.

SCARLET FEVER.

1904 Date	Sex	Age	Residence	Remarks
Jan. 8	M	7 wks	20 D'Arcy Street ...	Secondary.
„ 19	M	6	Colliery Row ...	
„ 19	F	4	21 D'Arcy Street ...	
„ 23	F	4	29 Mount Pleasant ...	
„ 26	M	5	3 Prospect Row ...	
„ 26	—	4	12 Robinson Street ...	
Feb. 1	M	2½	21 D'Arcy Street ...	Secondary.
„ 11	M	3½	12 Henry Street ...	
„ 19	M	12	Workhouse ...	
„ 24	M	2	Market Place ...	
Mar. 3	M	7	16 Quarry Row ...	
„ 9	F	4	Market Place ...	
„ 14	M	13	35 Quarry Row ...	
„ 17	F	5	Mantland Street ...	
„ 17	F	7	Mount Pleasant ...	Removed to Hospital, died.
„ 19	F	4	„ „	„ „ secondary.
„ 20	M	½	Sunderland Street...	
„ 25	F	28	Mount Pleasant ...	Secondary. removed to Hospital.
„ 28	M	5	8 Lambton Street ...	
„ 30	F	11	Colliery Row ...	
April 4	F	4	Market Place ...	Case of Diphtheria in a child in same house, March 16.
„ 13	F	7	„ „	
„ 13	F	3	13 Ironside Street...	
„ 20	M	3	6 Lambton Street ...	
„ 21	F	5	Market Place ...	Secondary.
„ 23	F	7	„ „	
„ 27	F	3	13 Baker Street ...	
May 4	M	4	Hopper Square ...	
„ 5	F	2	Sunderland Street...	
„ 5	M	3	Market Place ...	Secondary.
„ 9	M	5	„ „	„
„ 9	F	4	4 Henry Street ...	
„ 10	M	5	6 Outram Street ...	
„ 15	M	4	High Hill-side ...	Bad smell from drains at times ; Ashpits, &c., overloaded.

HOUGHTON URBAN DISTRICT.

SCARLET FEVER—continued.

1904 Date	Sex	Age	Residence	Remarks
May 16	M	2	34 Robinson Street ...	
" 18	M	4	" " " " ...	Secondary.
" 19	M	2½	High Hill-side ...	"
" 21	M	2½	Market Place ...	"
" 26	M	4	17 Union Street ...	Drains and out-houses defective.
" 27	M	1½	Half-way House ...	Removed to Hospital.
" 30	M	1	Sunderland Street...	
" 30	M	3	Robinson St., Bruce's Yd.	Ashpit overloaded.
June 1	F	3	" " " " ...	Secondary.
" 1	F	12	10 Balfour Street ...	Bad smell from manhole opposite
" 7	F	4	34 Robinson Street ...	Removed to Hospital.
" 11	F	3	92 Newbottle Street ...	
" 13	M	6	8 Hopper Street ...	
" 18	F	7	Short Street, New Town...	Found 2 children attending School
" 20	F	6	20 Lambton Street ...	
July 5	F	—	Bowlby Street ...	
" 7	F	3	Hopper Street ...	Secondary.
" 9	M	6	32 George Street ...	
" 14	M	1½	34 George Street ...	
" 15	F	3	High Hill-side ...	
" 19	M	3	15 George Street ...	
" 21	M	2	32 George Street ...	Secondary,
" 23	F	4	High Hill-side ...	"
Aug. 4	F	2	7 Hopper Street ...	
" 4	M	1	15 George Street ...	In same tenement as Quin (19th July)
" 9	F	8	1 George Street ...	
" 11	M	15	" " " " ...	Secondary.
" 13	M	14	Mantland Street ...	
" 17	F	4	Robinson Street ...	Bad smell from drains at back.
" 19	M	6	1 George Street ...	Secondary.
" 19	M	2	" " " " ...	
" 23	F	4	Market Place ...	Had " only occupied the house one [week.
" 24	F	9	" " " " ...	
" 31	M	7	Mautland Street ...	
" 31	M	6	2 Rose Street ...	Drains and out-houses defective.
Sep. 3	M	8	36 George Street ...	
" 5	M	5	Robinson St., Bruce's Yd.	Yard drain often choked.
" 5	F	2	High Hill-side ...	
" 19	M	3	Sunderland Street...	
" 13	F	12	36 George Street ...	Secondary.
" 15	F	5	1 Baker Street ...	
" 24	M	3	High Hill-side ...	
" 24	F	23	Elizabeth Street ...	Imported.
" 25	M	3	Bruce's Yd., Robinson St.	Secondary.
Oct. 5	F	9	9 Rose Street ...	
" 5	F	6	" " " " ...	
" 9	F	9	Ironside Street ...	
" 10	F	3	Bruce's B., Robinson St....	
" 12	F	9	Colliery Row ...	
" 15	M	4	48 Robinson Street ...	

HOUGHTON URBAN DISTRICT.

SCARLET FEVER—continued.

1904 Date	Sex	Age	Residence	Remarks
Oct. 17	F	5	56 Robinson Street ...	Found 2 children attending school Removed to Hospital.
„ 18	M	3	48 „ „ ...	
„ 20	F	10	10 Corven Row ...	
„ 29	F	5	Colliery Row ...	
„ 31	F	3½	Market Place ...	
Nov. 4	M	—	Grey Horse Lane ...	Found women in the house, &c. Secondary. Secondary.
„ 4	F	3	35 George Street ...	
„ 4	M	6	31 Robinson Street ...	
„ 7	M	1	High Hill-side ...	
„ 7	F	5	Bernard Street ...	
„ 9	F	9	Low Hill-side ...	
„ 11	F	3	35 George Street ...	
„ 12	F	6	5 Balfour Street ...	
„ 14	—	1	35 George Street ...	
„ 21	M	5	12 Robinson Street ...	
„ 23	M	3	High Hill-side ...	Third case.
„ 24	F	14	21 Church Street ...	
„ 25	F	4	Workhouse ...	
„ 28	M	5	Bruce's Yd., Sunderland St.	
„ 30	M	7	„ „	
Dec. 2	F	3	Johnston's Crescent ...	
„ 6	M	5	Abbott Street ...	
„ 8	F	7	Low Hill-side ...	
„ 11	M	4	18 Robinson Street ...	
„ 12	M	5	Bruce's Yd., Sunderland St.	
„ 12	F	3	„ „	

TYPHOID FEVER.

1904 Date	Sex	Age	Residence	Remarks
Jan. 11	M	26	Mount Pleasant ...	Ashpit too large; Privy walls damp.
„ 16	M	18	Quarry Row ...	
„ 21	M	30	Mount Pleasant ...	
April 27	F	17	Bowlby Street ...	Imported from Sunderland. Removed to Hospital.
June 20	F	39	Ironside Street ...	
„ 21	F	59	Edwin Street ...	Removed to Hospital. Yard drain liable to be choked. Deals in old clothes.
Aug. 4	F	17	15 Mildred Street...	
„ 7	M	10	39 Robinson Street ...	
„ 8	F	16	Sunderland Street ...	Sink drain defective. Taken ill at 4 Elm Place. Yard small, Privy close to back door.
„ 24	M	21	13 George Street ...	
„ 28	M	24	Bowlby Street ...	
„ 29	M	7	Mildred Street ...	
„ 29	F	24	Market Place ...	

HOUGHTON URBAN DISTRICT.

TYPHOID FEVER—continued.

1904 Date	Sex	Age	Residence	Remarks
Sep. 1	F	21	Mautland Street	Taken ill at 36 Robinson Street.
„ 3	F	19	Bowlby Street	Ashpits large, Privy walls damp.
„ 11	M	19	Robinson Street	Secondary.
„ 24	F	19	Hopper Square	Yard badly kept.
„ 21	M	25	Shield's Place	
„ 29	F	21	Hopper Square	Secondary.
„ 29	M	9	Mautland Street	„
„ 30	F	37	D'Arcy Street	
„ 30	F	4	Mautland Street	
Oct. 5	M	25	„ „	Secondary.
„ 5	M	17	D'Arcy Street	Street Ventilator.
„ 6	M	50	Hopper Square	Damp House.
„ 23	F	4	Mautland Street	Offensive Street Ventilator. Removed to Hospital.
„ 24	M	15	„ „	Secondary.
„ 28	M	26	Kirklee Lane	{ Eating mussels at the Houghton Feast.
Nov. 16	F	4½	Newbottle Row	{ Felt sick after standing over ash- pit refuse during removal.
„ 15	F	4	6 Hopper Square	Large offensive drain in yard.
„ 27	M	5	„ „	Secondary.

ERYSIPELAS.

1904 Date	Sex	Age	Residence	Remarks
Feb. 6	M	37	Hopper Street	
„ 11	M	27	Kirklee Lane	
„ 13	M	51	New Town... ..	
„ 24	F	64	Sunderland Street... ..	
Mar. 1	M	44	Colliery Row	
„ 1	F	1½	D'Arcy Street	
April 23	F	32	Prospect Row	
„ 28	M	56	New Town... ..	
May 17	F	55	Frederick Place	Result of cold.
„ 24	M	17	New Town... ..	
June 18	F	24	Robinson Street	
July 15	M	10	New Town... ..	
Aug. 3	F	58	Sunderland Street... ..	
„ 24	M	16	Lambton Street	Subsequent to accident.
Sep. 20	F	54	New Town... ..	
Oct. 11	M	58	Chilton Moor	
„ 22	F	50	Newbottle Street	
Nov. 26	F	42	Mautland Street	
„ 27	F	63	Edwin Street	
Dec. 4	F	67	Mount Pleasant	
„ 15	M	4	Newbottle Street	
„ 17	F	77	New Town... ..	
„ 21	F	15	Newbottle Street	Cold.

